



## **Selling Farm Products to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Fact Sheet**

Each year Congress provides funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to procure products and services from the private sector to meet needs the government cannot provide. USDA spends approximately \$4.6 billion annually procuring products. USDA estimates that the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) do over 60 percent of all its procurement purchases in support of the domestic food assistance programs administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

This fact sheet is designed to summarize how interested parties can sell their products to USDA. It is not comprehensive but includes contact information to organizations dedicated to helping interested parties compete for federal contracts.

Should you have any questions about any information in this fact sheet, please do not hesitate to contact my District office at (419) 259-7500 or my Washington, DC office at (202) 225-4146.

## **Understanding What USDA Buys & Doing Business with USDA**

### **Understanding What USDA Buys**

USDA procures a wide variety of products and services but purchasing food accounts for the largest share of its procurement budget. Below is a short breakdown of major USDA purchases (information that is more detailed can be found at <http://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/business/types.htm>).

#### **Percent of USDA Procurement Spending**

Subsistence/Agricultural (food) Commodities: 56%\*

Information Technology: 11%

Architect & Engineering/Construction/Real Property: 10%

Environmental Services: 10%

(\*Most subsistence/agricultural (food) commodity purchases are done by AMS & FSA)

### **Doing Business with USDA**

USDA's Departmental Management (DM) offices include the Office of Procurement & Property Management (OPPM), which is responsible for procurement/acquisition of goods and services other than agricultural (food) commodities. In addition, OPPM's Procurement Policy Division is responsible for USDA-wide procurement policy and regulations.

In an effort to assist interested parties in selling their products and services to USDA, the Procurement Policy Division established the *Doing Business with USDA* website. The website provides all the necessary information needed to sell to USDA including vendor registration information, qualification requirements, technical assistance programs, procurement procedures, and procurement forecasts.

You can visit the website at <http://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/business/index.htm>.

## **Agricultural Market Service (AMS) Procurement**

AMS purchases food products in support of the National School Lunch Program and other food assistance programs. These purchases also help to stabilize prices in agricultural commodity markets by balancing supply and demand.

AMS primarily purchases meat, poultry, fish, fruits, vegetables, certain juices and nuts, and eggs.

### **Vendor Information**

In order to sell products to USDA, potential vendors must be registered, and comply with federal and USDA purchasing regulations prior to submitting an offer.

You can learn how to become an approved vendor for AMS by visiting the AMS Commodity Procurement website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/commoditypurchasing> and reviewing the *Vendor Selling Kit* found at the bottom of the website.

### **Finding Procurement Opportunities**

All purchase announcements through AMS can be found online at AMS's Commodity Procurement website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/commoditypurchasing>.

AMS Commodity Procurement (AMS-CP) administers a News Subscription service that provides procurement information, notices, program news, and other information directly to interested parties via email. You can sign up for the service by visiting <http://info.ams.usda.gov/CPD/subscribe.php>.

## **Farm Service Agency (FSA) Procurement**

FSA's Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO) procures commodities for domestic and international food assistance programs. Examples of programs and agencies KCCO supplies include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs, and Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) programs.

KCCO primarily purchases corn, cornmeal, soybeans, wheat, bakery and cereal products, dairy products, sugar, nuts, honey, and some oils.

### **Vendor Information**

In order to sell products to USDA, potential vendors must be registered, and comply with federal and USDA purchasing regulations prior to submitting an offer.

You can learn how to become an approved vendor for KCCO by visiting any of the following websites:

#### **Qualification Requirements for Prospective Contractors**

[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/qualificationrequirements.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/qualificationrequirements.pdf)

#### **Master Solicitation for Commodity Procurements**

[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/master\\_solicitation.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/master_solicitation.pdf)

#### **Guide for Selling Agricultural Commodities to the Government**

[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/selling\\_to\\_govt\\_users\\_guide.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/selling_to_govt_users_guide.pdf)

**Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur's Online Congressional Office:** <http://kaptur.house.gov>

### **Finding Procurement Opportunities**

KCCO provides information about purchasing and selling of commodities through two websites, which can be found below.

Commodity Operations' Procurement and Sales

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=coop&topic=pas>

Web Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) Public Procurement Page

<https://portal.wbscm.usda.gov/publicprocurement>

### **Additional Procurement Resources**

#### **Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) Website**

Generally speaking, FedBizOpps serves as the single point of entry for announcements of federal procurement opportunities over \$25,000. Interested parties can search for opportunities by department or agency, location, and type.

The FedBizOpps website can be found at <http://www.fbo.gov>.

#### **General Services Administration (GSA) Schedules**

The General Services Administration (GSA) manages federal property and makes purchases on behalf of federal departments and agencies. GSA administers the Schedules Program (also called Multiple Award Schedules (MAS) and Federal Supply Schedules (FSS)). The Schedules Program allows potential vendors to register what services they can provide to the government and receive notices when a potential opportunity becomes available requesting the service that a potential vendor can supply.

For more information about the Schedules program, please visit <http://www.gsa.gov/schedules>.

### **Technical Assistance Resources**

#### **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)**

Congress established an Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) within the largest federal departments and agencies to help small businesses compete for federal contracts. USDA's OSDBU works to prevent barriers for small businesses during the procurement process, meets with small businesses to ascertain how to best help, and provides technical assistance to small businesses to increase and expand the number and variety of small firms doing business with USDA.

For more information including contact information, please visit: <http://www.dm.usda.gov/osdbu/>.

#### **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is an independent agency created to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small businesses. SBA's Contracting website provides detailed information on the various aspects of federal procurement. SBA also provides contracting assistance through its many local satellite offices.

You can view SBA's Contracting website by visiting <http://www.sba.gov/contracting>.

You can find your local SBA office by visiting <http://www.sba.gov/local-assistance>.